



## Raise a glass to The Yeatman

Portugal's luxury wine hotel allows connoisseurs to enjoy the country's viticultural delights in a stunning setting

We arrive in Porto on a cloudy afternoon, but the cab driver tells us cheerily that we've just missed the rain as he whisks us south of the river Douro to The Yeatman hotel. Set among seven acres of greenery and amid the city's historic port lodges, The Yeatman is Portugal's first luxury wine hotel.

This is apparent when we walk through the entrance to the hotel's grand reception area to be greeted by a large statue of Bacchus, the Roman god of wine, who stands before a spectacular view of the city. The Yeatman dedicates itself to the very best of Portuguese wines, from big



On the waterfront: from top, the hotel's pool with a view, chef Ricardo Costa and wines in Dick's Bar



Sumptuous: the Bacchus suite, the Yeatman's largest room, has a king-sized, rotating bed and a barrel bath

names to boutique producers, and works with several wine partners including Croft Port, Borges and Fiuza. In 2011, the hotel won the prestigious Best Wine List award in a competition run by leading wine magazine *Revista de Vinhos*.

The wine partners help the hotel organise tastings, which means guests can sample all 82 of its wines by the glass in either the restaurant or in Dick's Bar. And every Thursday the hotel's Michelin-starred restaurant hosts a four-course dinner with a different wine partner – each course tailor made by award-winning executive chef Ricardo Costa. The partners guide guests through their portfolios, enabling them to gain an insight into their region, style and just what it is that sets them apart.

Dick's Bar, which never shuts, offers a panoramic view of Porto while creating signature port cocktails for guests. Drinks can also be enjoyed in The Library.

All 82 rooms have a balcony providing guests with stunning views of the city and the Douro. Each is sponsored by a different wine partner, which decorates the room however it pleases, meaning that no two rooms are alike. The Taylor Port room, for example,



Bliss: a guest undergoes an alfresco spa treatment stands out for its barrel bed. The barrel contained wine until May 2010 when it was drained and converted into a bed for the hotel opening four months later. The Bacchus suite is the largest and most exclusive room complete with a rotating bed, barrel bath, private terrace and balcony.

The Yeatman Wine Cellar, open every afternoon for guests to tour with a guide, houses 25,000 bottles – from table wines to port and dessert wines – which are arranged by region.

And when it's time to unwind, head to the hotel's Caudalie spa. Caudalie makes use of products that vineyards don't use such as grape seeds and grape oil in its spa treatments, making it an ideal fit for the hotel. Guests can enjoy the signature barrel bath treatment, which allows them to relax with views of Porto and choose between a grape bath, for calming effects, or a red-wine bath to boost blood circulation.

Wine lovers won't want to leave, but before checking out make sure you visit the hotel shop, which sells all the wines served as well as personalised products and Caudalie items, allowing you to take a little bit of this wonderful trip back home.

Behiye Hassan

### FACT FILE

**Getting there** The Yeatman is a 20-minute drive from Porto's international airport. TAP Portugal flies to Porto from Gatwick and Heathrow. EasyJet and Ryanair fly from Gatwick and Stansted respectively. Or book through WEXAS at [www.iod.com/travel](http://www.iod.com/travel) (020 7838 5989).

**Accommodation** Executive room prices start from €139 (£120) for a single or €154 for a double. Suites start at €405. [www.the-yeatman-hotel.com](http://www.the-yeatman-hotel.com)